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Policy Statement

on the Delivery of Surgical Services

a discussion paper

November 17, 1999

Government's Mission

To maintain and improve the health of Albertans by leading and working collaboratively with citizens and stakeholders.

This mission requires that government:

- Adhere to the principles of the *Canada Health Act*.
- Lead and support a system for the delivery of quality health services.
- Encourage and support healthy living.

Government's Commitment to Albertans

The Government of Alberta is prepared to legislate its commitment to maintain a publicly funded and publicly administered system for the delivery of quality health services. Six key principles form the foundation of government's commitment to the publicly funded health system and will be incorporated in legislation:

Universality

Alberta's health care insurance plan entitles all Albertans to the insured physician and hospital services provided for by the plan on a fair and equitable basis.

Excellence

Alberta's health system strives for excellence in the delivery of quality services based on high standards and best practices.

Comprehensiveness

Alberta's health care plan covers all insured health services provided by hospitals and medical practitioners.

Accessibility

Alberta's health care insurance plan provides reasonable access to medically necessary hospital and physician services without charges or other barriers, and reasonable compensation to physicians and hospitals providing insured services.

Portability

Alberta residents moving to another province continue to be covered for insured health services during any minimum waiting period imposed by the new province. Insured health services are available to insured Albertans while they are temporarily absent from Alberta.

Public Administration

Alberta's health care insurance plan is administered and operated on a non-profit basis by a public authority, responsible to the provincial government and subject to audit of its accounts and financial transactions.

Goal Statement

A priority goal of the Government of Alberta is to sustain and improve the delivery of accessible, effective, quality health services to all Albertans who need them.

Proposed Policy on Contracting for Surgical Services

The Government of Alberta proposes the following policy with respect to the delivery of surgical services:

1. All Albertans will have access to insured surgical services on a fair and equitable basis through the publicly funded and publicly administered health system. — fair access

2. Regional Health Authorities are accountable to the Minister of Health and Wellness and responsible for assessing the needs of the population, determining priorities and allocating resources, and ensuring reasonable access to quality services. — accountability

3. Private providers of insured surgical services will operate only under the jurisdiction of a Regional Health Authority. There will be no private hospitals; there will not be a parallel health system. — no private hospitals

4. Regional Health Authorities are responsible for determining the appropriate means for delivery of <u>all</u> insured surgical services: — RHA responsibility

   4.1 A Regional Health Authority may, subject to the approval of the Minister, contract with a private provider (either profit or not-for-profit) for the provision of surgical services. — contracts for insured surgical services

   4.2 Contracted providers are prohibited from charging any fee (including a facility fee) to insured persons for an insured surgical service beyond those set out in the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan. There will be no two-tier medicine and no queue jumping. — no fees

   4.3 The Minister must consider the following criteria for making a decision to approve or not approve a contract for surgical services between a Regional Health Authority and a private provider: — contracts approval

      a. Consistency with the Government's legislated principles and adherence to the principles of the *Canada Health Act*.
      b. The current and future need within the publicly funded system for the surgical service recommended by the Regional Health Authority.
      c. Impact on the publicly funded health system in Alberta, including its sustainability into the future.
      d. The demonstrated net benefit of the proposed contract, including implications for accessibility and cost effectiveness.
      e. The projected cost of the contract and the Regional Health Authority's ability to fund it.
      f. An acceptable statement of quality results and outcomes and a commitment by both parties to measure and report to the Minister of Health and Wellness.

g. Whether or not the public interest would be served.
h. Any other factors that the Minister considers relevant.

4.4 Privately operated facilities providing insured surgical services must be accredited by the College of Physicians and Surgeons prior to delivery of services. Failure to obtain or maintain accreditation will be reason to terminate a contract.

accreditation

4.5 The Minister's rationale for approval of a contract will be open to public scrutiny.

4.6 The Minister may withdraw an approval if the conditions of approval are violated.

5. Regional Health Authorities are responsible for coordinating the delivery of uninsured surgical services requiring an extended stay by the patient. Surgical services requiring an extended stay will be determined by the College of Physician and Surgeons.

agreements for uninsured surgical services

5.1 Extended stay, uninsured surgical services may be delivered by:

a. a Regional Health Authority,
b. a private provider under an agreement, approved by the Minister, between the Regional Health Authority and the private provider.

5.2 The Minister must consider the following criteria in making a decision to approve or not approve a proposed agreement:

agreements approval

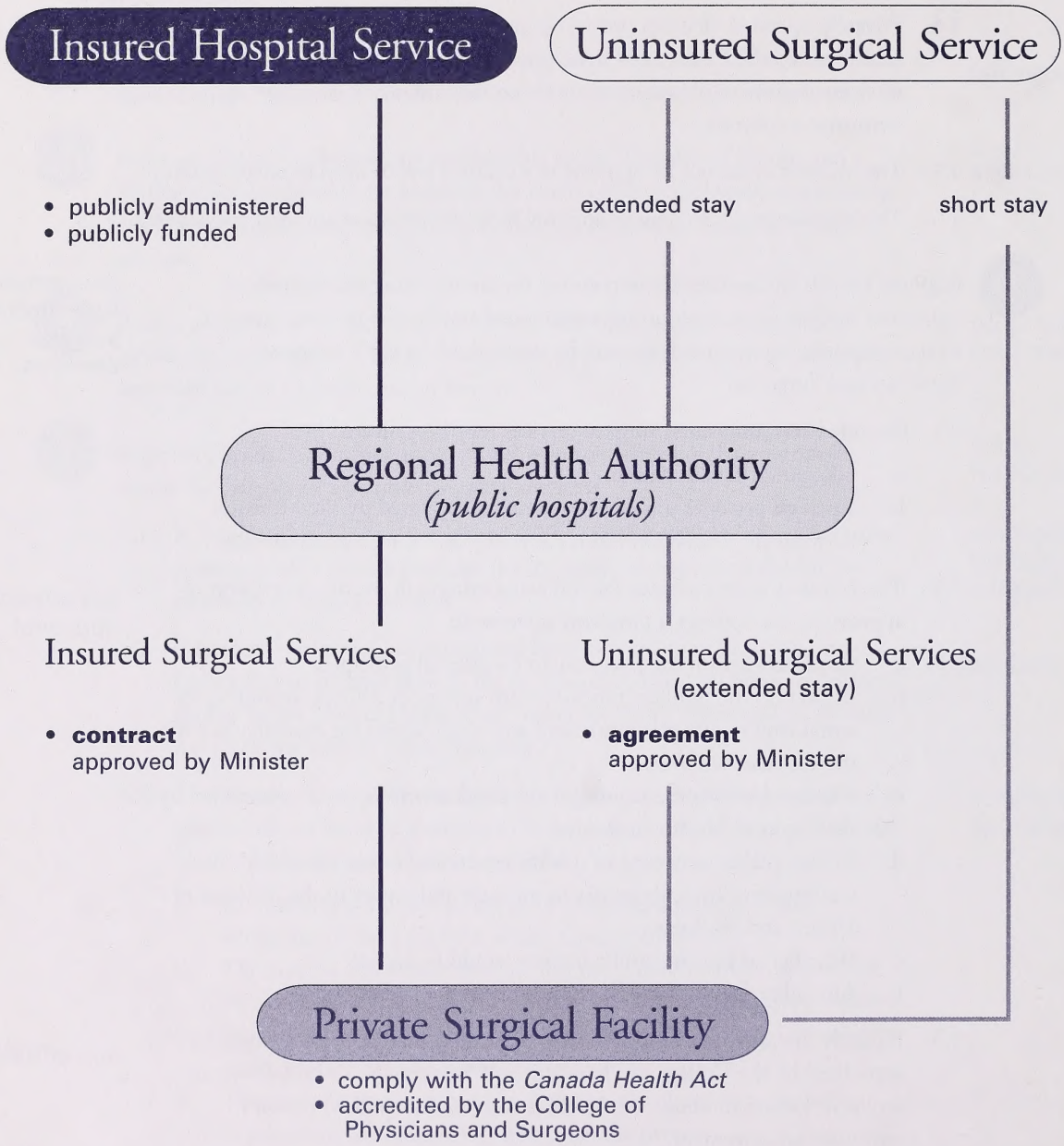
a. Consistency with the government's legislated principles.
b. Impact on the publicly funded health system in Alberta, including its sustainability into the future and any implications for compliance with the *Canada Health Act*.
c. The need within the region for the surgical service as recommended by the Regional Health Authority.
d. An acceptable statement of quality results and outcomes and a commitment by both parties to measure and report to the Minister of Health and Wellness.
e. Whether or not the public interest would be served.
f. Any other factors that the Minister considers relevant.

5.3 Privately operated facilities providing uninsured surgical services must be accredited by the College of Physicians and Surgeons prior to delivery of services. Failure to obtain or maintain accreditation will be reason to terminate an agreement.

accreditation

5.4 The Minister's rationale for approval of an agreement will be open to public scrutiny.

5.5 The Minister may withdraw the approval if any conditions of approval are violated.


Insured Hospital Service
Uninsured Surgical Service
• publicly administered
• publicly funded
extended stay
short stay
Regional Health Authority
(public hospitals)
Insured Surgical Services
• contract
approved by Minister
Uninsured Surgical Services
(extended stay)
• agreement
approved by Minister
Private Surgical Facility
• comply with the Canada Health Act
• accredited by the College of
Physicians and Surgeons

Feedback

Albertans are invited to provide their comments to the Minister of Health and Wellness before legislation is introduced for the consideration of the Legislature in Spring 2000.

Comments may be:

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